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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001679

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SUBJECT: KARZAI: CONCERNS ABOUT SECURITY AND PRIVATE  
SECURITY FORCES WITH DIAG

Classified By: AMBASSADOR WILLIAM WOOD FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: At a May 15 DIAG meeting, President Karzai voiced concerns about the perception of defenselessness held by citizens in Paktia following the recent skirmish between Afghan and Pakistani forces on the border. He cited citizens' concerns that the disarmament process has diminished their ability to defend their homes and that DIAG and DDR promised increased security but have not delivered. Karzai also raised attention about unlicensed Afghan security firms in Kabul. Vice President Khalili echoed Karzai's concerns and called for increased development assistance to disarmed districts as an incentive for other districts to disarm. Meeting participants emphasized the importance of political support for DIAG by parliamentarians and local officials. End Summary.

¶2. (C) President Karzai called the meeting on short notice. Attendees included Ambassador Wood, the Japanese and Canadian Ambassadors, COMISAF General McNeil, UNAMA DSRSG Alexander and several Afghan Cabinet ministers including Minister of Defense Wardak and Minister of Interior Moqbel.

¶3. (C) Former Minister Stanekzai, Chairman of the Disarmament and Reintegration Commission (D & R) briefed Karzai and the International Community on efforts to mobilize political support for DIAG from the Afghan Parliament. He noted there was no significant opposition from parliamentarians towards DIAG efforts but said they needed to be more vocal in their support in order to gain greater momentum for DIAG efforts on the provincial and district level.

¶4. (C) Stanekzai said the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development is working with DIAG to create development projects in districts where disarmament has taken place. He also expressed concern over the presence of unlicensed Afghan security firms particularly in Kabul. He reported that 7,000 weapons in Kabul are in the possession of these firms' employees and are outside GOA control. Minister of Interior Moqbel said the international community was responsible for the actions of these firms because they are the primary clients not Afghans. UNAMA DSRSG Alexander replied the

security firms exist in part because the GOA currently does not have the personnel to protect diplomatic missions. (Note: NGOs and international business entities also employ private security firms due to the inability of the Afghan police to safeguard their personnel, property, and installations. End Note.)

#### IC RESPONSE

15. (C) Japanese Ambassador Kosuge called for an expansion of DIAG to Afghanistan's major cities. He also cautioned on the potential for instability in disarmed districts if ANP forces do not move in and establish a presence. UNAMA DSRSG Alexander acknowledged a decline in the number of illegal armed groups due to DIAG efforts but said the process needs vocal support from provincial and district stakeholders in order to gain momentum on disarming efforts. Alexander also said MOI reform is needed to remove MOI personnel with close ties to illegal armed groups.

#### COMMENT

16. (C) Many security firms provide bodyguards to powerful Afghans, without GOA supervision. The MOI is right to be concerned about this, and has a regulation in draft. We are working closely with MOI to ensure that the regulation will allow sufficient security protection for international entities operating in Kabul, particularly banks and other businesses as well as the U.S. Embassy which employs international security contractors. The link between this issue and DIAG lies in the continued insecurity felt by Afghans and internationals (both in the cities and in the countryside). Until these people feel more secure -- and that

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means police and prosecutors actually arresting, convicting and incarcerating criminals -- getting them to disarm will remain difficult.  
WOOD